

2001 Annual Report Executive Summary

Halifax, Edgecombe, Wilson Enterprise Community

The Year 2001 was full of productivity and change in the Halifax, Edgecombe, Wilson Enterprise Alliance Enterprise Community (HEWEA-EC). This executive summary will highlight activity within our three county Enterprise Community. A breakdown by county follows.

Halifax County Enterprise Community: The Halifax County Enterprise Community has expanded its partnership this year. Three new community non-profit organizations have been added: Hollister Citizens Organization, Hollister Group Work Camp, and Native Opportunity Way Community Development Corporation.

Hollister Citizens Organization: In an effort to help the community, Hollister Citizens Organization, Inc., has begun the challenge of providing a community center to residents by renovating a presently existing building. This center will serve the Hollister/Brinkleyville Township and will be open to all the citizens. After many painstaking fundraising efforts over the past six years, Hollister Citizens Organization has received funding and the renovations have begun. Renovations are expected to be completed in 2002. Once completed, the community will be provided with many services such as: meeting room/classroom space, activity rooms, computer learning activities, youth activities, after school programs, summer camp, drug abuse counseling, family counseling and the center will serve as a resource center and meeting place for the entire Hollister/Brinkleyville Township.

Hollister Group Work Camp: Approximately 400 adults and teen-age volunteers came from across the United States to participate at the Carolina Pines work camp in Halifax County from July 15th through July 21st. The 425 participants did repairs on 64 Homes in the Hollister area. Projects to improve homes consisted of one or more of the following: repair work: painting on the exterior and/or interior, roofing replaced, porches repaired, siding added or replaced, skirting installed on mobile homes, porches added and/or ramps added to enhance accessibility. The work done represented 12,000 hours of volunteer labor, worth at least \$80,000 to the community.

Hollister REACH: The year of 2001 was a very productive year for Hollister REACH, Inc. Thanks to the foundations and other funding agencies Hollister REACH was able to enhance its program development and services. Funding from the Warner Foundation enabled Hollister REACH to hire a Fundraiser/Program Coordinator and Financial Officer. Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation provided funding to hire a grassroots leader. Funding from the HEW Enterprise Alliance and many volunteer hours enabled Hollister REACH to bring their 2,496 sq. ft. building to 95% completion. Minor details such as handrails for the steps and wheelchair ramp, individual stalls for the bathrooms and handicap rails are in the process of being installed. The Between Ages Senior Empowerment Group saw quite a few changes in 2001, but they rallied and have put into practice what they had been empowered to do – operate their own organization. They have become more self-sufficient, and continued their activities and programs. They have had new members join and they now have about thirty-five members. The seniors are transported to various activities on the REACH van that is driven by a Title V employee. Once a month they have Senior Empowerment Day, lunch is brought in by the seniors and REACH supplies sodas and some food. Halifax County Health Department comes in to administer blood pressure checks, weight checks, flu shots, and referrals. The seniors take an annual trip that is educational and fun. The Learning Center has exceeded expectations this past year, even with limited financial resources there was a successful summer enrichment program and the after-school program has continued. REACH has acquired the tutoring services of a Wesleyan College student. Another Title V employee has been most instrumental in continuing the after-school program. The Hollister Center for Biblical and Theological Studies maintains an enrollment of 12-15 students each semester. Community services of music classes, computer classes, and Toys for Tots have

all been well attended by the community and will continue throughout 2002. The Thrift Shop did well in 2001. It is viable to the point of being able to pay its utility bill and a portion of the manager's salary. The young adult physical fitness class is now also in operation.

Native Opportunity Way Community Development Corporation: In fiscal year 2001, Native Opportunity Way Community Development Corporation (NOW-CDC) provided services and activities in the areas of transportation, referral, counseling and advocacy. The organization put in place all internal documents including administrative policies and procedures, financial policies and procedures and by-laws. Also, board training was provided and the organization started the process of assessing the needs of the community through a survey. Funding was received from HUD and the Housing Assistance Council, Inc., to give the organization capacity to provide homeownership opportunities to our low-wealth community. NOWCDC received \$149,560 from HUD and \$8,525 was received from the Housing Assistance Council, Inc. **Town of Enfield:** The most significant accomplishment was finally completing the lengthy process of reviewing the benchmarks and revising them into two viable projects. The Town decided to develop a community resource center and continue their partnership with the PRIDE After School Tutorial Program. There was good community participation during the benchmark revision process. Town council meetings were well attended and citizens actively participated. The Town of Enfield found a new partnership with Progressive Resources, Inc. This agency will provide grant writing services and technical assistance for the community resource center building project. The NC Rural Development Office of USDA has been helpful in guidance on the process and requirements for applying for community resource funds. Problems and obstacles that emerged since the strategic plan was developed were finding the right personnel to administer the Enterprise Community benchmarks for the Town. Plans and prospects for the future include leveraging funds to purchase property for the community resource facility and re-implementing the After School Tutoring Program that Proved to be very successful at the elementary and middle school located in the Enfield Enterprise Community.

Edgecombe County Enterprise Community: Rocky Mount OIC: This year was a year of continued success for Rocky Mount OIC and the Enterprise Community. Once again, EC residents attended a paid work experience program. The Summer Youth activities continued, employing many in the EC. The Basic Education Program providing adult participants with an alternative to community college based learning continued a stable enrollment of students from the EC also. **Rocky Mount/Edgecombe Community Development Corporation:** The Rocky Mount/Edgecombe Community Development Corporation (RMECDC) continues to manage its benchmarks for the community real estate developments (including commercial, housing, and downtown façade), homeownership counseling, and small business skills development. The RMECDC continues to provide services, in partnership with the City of Rocky Mount, Edgecombe County, and other nonprofits. RMECDC continues to be involved in providing housing recovery and replacement service to thousands of local families impacted by Hurricane Floyd floodwaters. In 2001, RMECDC progressively has continued to add to its development of single and multifamily housing, acquired buildings, purchased land, and continued to construct an industrial incubator in the EC and developable sites adjacent to the EC. The Edgecombe County EC is a small area in two census tracts, with limited vacant land. EC Housing development strategies have brought forth the opportunities and utilization of housing rehabilitation, new construction, and developable site new construction. RMECDC's administrative offices are located within the downtown EC and provide services to the EC and broader community.

Wilson County Enterprise Community: City of Wilson: Rehabilitation funds have been provided to owner-occupied homes in the City's redevelopment areas. Nineteen units have been completed. The City provided downpayment assistance to thirteen tenants to enable them to become new homeowners; then the homes were rehabilitated. EC funding was leveraged by a CDBG grant that provided the bulk of the rehab costs. Blighting conditions have been addressed and homeownership opportunities have been provided to help stabilize the neighborhood. EC Home Buyer Assistance funds have been provided to

seventeen new homeowners in Freeman Place II. Thirty-two units have been completed and the new homeowners have moved in. One hundred percent of the construction has been completed. EC funding was leveraged with City funds for downpayment assistance and for acquisition and clearance of properties. Blighting conditions have been addressed and homeownership opportunities have been provided to help stabilize the neighborhood. The Park Construction and Neighborhood Resource Centers benchmarks have been combined to complete the construction and park for the Elvie Community Resource Center. The City provided \$142,000 for construction of the center. The center was completed in September 1998 and provides space for neighborhood meetings and other program activities. EC funding in the amount of \$15,000 will be used to make aesthetic improvements in the City's redevelopment areas under the Community Beautification benchmark. EC funding in the amount of \$10,000 will be used to provide technical assistance and support for various neighborhood groups served by new resource centers.

Wilson Community Improvement Association: This year proved to be both rewarding and challenging in the areas of project and partnership development. Both single family development projects experienced delays in areas of not receiving state funding to begin construction, staff turnover, or the reluctance of a local unit of government to undertake a project which they had little or no experience in developing. After several months of convincing the state to release the funds and assuring the local unit of government that the project would be a tremendous asset for the community both projects are now moving forward. The Emeritus Director met with old friends at their former school, which was built with Rosenwald funds. (Rosenwald funds help build schools to educate blacks in North Carolina.) The group plans to form a partnership to save the historic structure. WCIA partnered with the Omega Development Group and residents of east Wilson to secure funding and restore the Oliver Nestus Freeman Round House. The building will be used as a museum to display accomplishments of local African Americans. The retired director and current director were featured in the 2nd issue of a quarterly publication of "Marketwise", a community development magazine from the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. WCIA's partnership with Wilson Enterprise Community residents, government and business community have resulted in tangible progress for the Enterprise Community.